

REMARKS

Claims 1-32 were pending in the present application. Claims 5 and 22 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 6, 10, 18, 19, 21, and 23-27 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1-4, 6-21, and 23-32 are now pending in the application.

Claims 10-32 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 5 and 6 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 10-17 and 27-32 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35.U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph. Claims 10 and 27 have been amended for clarity. The Applicant notes that claim 10 has been amended for additional clarity; however the scope of claim 10 has not been changed.

Claims 22 and 23 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35.U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph, and to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Applicant notes that claims 18, 19, 24-26 were clear and definite on their face. However to expedite allowance, claims 18, 19, 24-26 have been amended per the Examiner's recommendations.

Claims 1, 7 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Krakauer et al. (U.S. Patent Number 4,993,030) (hereinafter 'Krakauer'). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in light of the foregoing claim amendments, Applicant believes this rejection to now be moot.

Claims 1-4, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hewitt (U.S. Patent Number 6,526,538). Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of cancelled claim 5. Applicant believes claim 1 to be allowable and this rejection to now be moot.

Claims 7, 18-21, 24, and 26 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Hewitt. Claim 18 has been amended to incorporate the limitations of cancelled claim 22. Applicant believes claim 18 to be allowable and this rejection to now be moot.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 18, 24, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Belser et al. (U.S. Patent Number 5,737,344) (hereinafter 'Belser'). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection. However, in light of the foregoing claim amendments, Applicant believes this rejection to now be moot.

The Examiner acknowledged that claim 5 and claim 22 were allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim. Thus claim 5 was cancelled and the limitations therein were incorporated into claim 1. Likewise, claim 22 was cancelled and the limitations of claim 22 were incorporated into claim 18.

Accordingly, Applicant believes that Claim 1, along with its dependent claims, patentably distinguishes over Krakauer, Hewitt, and Belser.

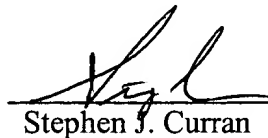
Similarly, Applicant believes claims 10, 18, and 27, along with their respective dependent claims, patentably distinguish over Krakauer, Hewitt, and Belser.

CONCLUSION

Applicant submits the application is in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is requested.

If any fees are due, the Commissioner is authorized to charge said fees to Meyertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert, & Goetzel, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505/5681-80800/BNK.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Curran", is written over a horizontal line.

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AGENT FOR APPLICANT(S)

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